

my fellow Kentuckians in congratulating these fine young ladies.●

JUAN MEJIA

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am pleased to recognize Juan Mejia for his achievement in becoming the Tulare County spelling bee champion and his entrance into the prestigious National Spelling Bee in Washington D.C.

Juan was born in Guzman, Mexico and moved to the United States when he was a year and a half old. He learned English while attending pre-school at a Head Start Program at Sundale School. Continuing on to Kohn Elementary he distinguished himself as a bright and motivated student and was accepted into the GATE program for gifted students. Now at Live Oak Middle School he continues to excel in his studies and extra-curricular activities.

Juan Mejia's achievement in the Tulare County Spelling Bee is particularly notable because of his late introduction to the English language. By working hard and using all available resources, Juan overcame an educational barrier to become a master of the English language. For his focus, fortitude and determined work, I congratulate him and wish him the best of luck in the National Spelling Bee in Washington D.C. Regardless of the outcome in the National Spelling Bee, Juan Mejia is a tremendous success and a worthy example of how challenges can be met and overcome with focused effort and perseverance.●

IN RECOGNITION OF DOUG HARRISON

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am pleased to recognize Doug Harrison's lifetime of service to the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, and most importantly, the people of Fresno County.

In 1970, Doug Harrison began a career with the FMFCD. He served as general manager for 31 years. Mr. Harrison led the effort that designed and implemented a storm drainage system that ended regular flooding which had plagued residences and businesses for generations. Under his leadership, the construction of flood retention basins throughout the Fresno-Clovis metropolitan area became part of a network of groundwater recharge facilities, and in recent years Mr. Harrison led efforts to work with community groups, such as Tree Fresno, to landscape many of these facilities. The result has been the protection of property, replenishment of vital groundwater resources and beautiful greenspace, as well as recreational facilities at many basins.

Mr. Harrison is an exemplary public servant, who has worked tirelessly for a broad constituency. He has made the lives of many people better. His innovation, energy and dedication will be missed. To him, I say thank you. He is a public servant in the best and truest sense of the word.●

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL TEAM

● Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I commend the Kennesaw State University Owls basketball team for winning its first NCAA Division II national championship title. In the 84-59 victory over Southern Indiana, the Owls showed great poise. After the Screaming Eagles sprinted to an eight-point lead, the Owls settled down, regained the lead and never lost it. The team, which moved up to the NCAA Division II Peach Belt Conference in 1994, took the championship in only their second appearance at the NCAA Division II national tournament.

The title capped a 35-4 season record, which had ended with a 26-game winning streak and the Peach Belt championship.

I commend Coach Tommy Ingle, his assistant coaches Jeff Jones and Stace Tedford, for developing and leading this strong team of student athletes. Coach Ingle was able to take the team to a national title in only his second year at the helm. That is extremely impressive.

I also want to praise the players themselves, including seniors Reggie McCoy, Terrence Hill, and Justin Thompson for displaying leadership, determination, skill and sportsmanship. This young basketball squad has already made its mark in college basketball.

In addition to their basketball performance, the Fighting Owls have demonstrated the personal qualities that make them a credit to one of Georgia's great institutes of higher learning, and a credit to the great State of Georgia as well.●

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I would like to pay tribute to Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, the second Greek Orthodox congregation to be formed in the state of Michigan. Events celebrating the 75th anniversary of Assumption Church began in 2003 and will continue in 2004 with a grand banquet to be held on April 24. These events bring together members of the congregation, as well as thousands of others from throughout the metropolitan Detroit area and around the country, to mark this milestone in the history of Assumption Church.

At the turn of the century, many Greek immigrants settled in cities and towns across the nation. Greek immigrants established a thriving community in Detroit, in what has become known as Greektown. Seventy-five years ago, seven men from the growing Greek community on Detroit's "eastside" met to lay plans for a parochial school and a place of worship that would be close to their homes. They sought to continue the tradition of teaching the Greek language and history to their community. In 1930, with

the blessing of the Patriarch of Constantinople, the first Church Council established the Assumption Church at Hillger and Kercheval in Detroit. The Church was formally named "Koimisis tis Theotokou" meaning "The Dormition of the Virgin Mary."

The Church experienced steady growth in both the number of families that joined the parish and the number of new programs that served the needs of the parishioners. Beginning with its first Greek school "Socrates," the Church added various programs for its youth, women, and senior citizens, and continued to expand its philanthropic and religious outreach. The parishioners' reputation as a thriving, caring congregation grew and attracted families from Detroit's suburbs and beyond. Today, more than 1,200 families belong to Assumption Church, making it the largest parish in the region and one of the largest parishes in the Archdiocese.

The Assumption Greek Orthodox Church family moved several times over the years before building the current facilities in St. Clair Shores, which include the notable Assumption Cultural Center. They built churches at Beniteau and Vernor Highway and on Charlevoix that serve Protestant congregations today. Like these stalwart structures that are reminders of the congregation's vision and faithfulness, Assumption's spiritual leaders have been significant pillars in the community. The first priest, Father Christopher Makris, arrived in Detroit from Chicago. His service was followed by 11 clergy leaders and several laity, who have been represented in the highest positions of service nationally in matters of religious education, stewardship, athletics, the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical festival and various missionary activities. Father Demetrios Kavadas provided spiritual leadership for 39 years and is Assumption's longest serving clergyman. In 2003, Father Epihanios Perialas became interim pastor and honored the parish through his elevation to Metropolitan of Spain and Portugal. Father Michael Varlamos became pastor in 2003 and continues to serve in that capacity today. Unfortunately, the Church experienced a devastating fire on December 21, 2002, that destroyed the interior of the Church along with its beautiful iconography. The Church was promptly restored and re-opened its doors almost one year to the day, in December 2003.

I know my colleagues join me in congratulating the congregation of Assumption Greek Orthodox Church for achieving 75 years of devotion to God, their faith, and excellence in serving their members and the surrounding communities.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.